

THE FORGOTTEN GENOCIDE

North Korea's Prison State

Robert Park

North Korea's nuclear weapons test on February 12th was its third and most powerful to date. According to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's state-controlled news agency, the test was carried out "using a miniaturized and lighter nuclear device with greater explosive force than previously." It was a wake-up call for some in the arms control community who have dismissed Pyongyang's nuclearization merely as a bargaining chip for monetary or material concessions and against regime change. The North Koreans are now playing in the big leagues, with a warhead small enough to be used on an intercontinental ballistic missile that, according to the regime, could potentially strike not only US bases in South Korea and Japan, but also Guam and the US mainland. Those who ritualistically condemned the test also ignored one of the issues that it was meant to obscure: while spending billions on its nuclear program, the Kim regime, in continuity with its dynastic predecessors, was also presiding over a state-induced famine and mass atrocities within its prison camp system that have taken on the proportions of a homemade genocide.

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